FOOTBALL COACH TRAINING CURRICULUM FOR PARENTS:
Communicating Proper Youth Football Blocking/Tackling Techniques and Enhancing Communication When Addressing Player Mistakes

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By

Jim Knight

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We the undersigned, certify that we read this thesis and approve it as adequate in scope and quality for the degree Master of Arts.

Thesis or Project Director

Faculty Mentor

Faculty Reader

Gonzaga University
MA Program in Communication and Leadership Studies
ABSTRACT

Football is an extremely passionate game and has created interest from many different age groups in the United States. In particular, youth football is especially popular with children in the fifth and sixth grade age group and their parents. With injuries such as concussions becoming a massive concern nationally across all playing levels (youth, high school, college, and professional), the popularity of football is not diminishing with parents continuing to register their children to play youth football. In many youth football leagues across the country, parents are often used as coaches. Some parents, who have limited to no experience coaching youth football, believe they have an appropriate amount of coaching experience to become an assistant coach or head coach of a youth football team. The problem is when parents that want to help coach football do not have the level of youth football coaching experience, do not have the appropriate training to communicate proper football techniques (such as blocking and tackling) or have the skill to communicate effectively when players make mistakes. To address this issue, a football coach training curriculum has been developed for parents. Behavior Alteration Techniques are included in the training curriculum to help parents more effectively communicate to players regarding proper techniques and after a mistake is made (McCroskey, Kearney, Plax, Richmond, 1985; Cayanus, Martin, Rocca, Weber, 2009). The overall goal is to make parents more knowledgeable about fundamental blocking/tackling techniques and to give them communication techniques that can be used with youth football players when mistakes occur in practices or games.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Importance of Study

Football in the United States has become one of the most watched sports on television. Every football season, professional and College football can be viewed on cable or satellite television almost every day of the week. According to The Nielsen Company’s first quarter 2012 Cross-Platform Report, eighty-three percent of U.S. households either have cable or satellite (The Nielsen Company, 2012). It is safe to assume that football is being watched by all age groups, children and adults alike. Even with an increasing concern for concussions, parents continue to sign-up their kids in football leagues across the country. One school district in Indiana is a location that has seen an increase in football sign-ups each year for the last several years, according to a school district youth football board member. With more kids, there is a need for more coaches. Finding a coach is no simple task. Parents are often used as coaches. Although, there are more parents that want to be involved in coaching, that is not necessarily always a good experience. Some parents believe they have an appropriate amount of coaching experience to become an assistant coach or head coach of a youth football team. The problem comes when parents that want to help coach football do not have the level of experience or appropriate training to communicate proper football techniques and have the skill to communicate effectively when players make mistakes.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this project is to develop a training curriculum for proper blocking and tackling techniques and how to best communicate resolutions to mistakes made by players in games and practices. This training curriculum is specifically designed for parents that have limited training or experience coaching youth football. The techniques included in the curriculum will be specific to blocking and tackling. Blocking and tackling are fundamental parts
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of football, but essential to each team’s success and players’ development. This coaching curriculum will be for parents that would like to coach fifth through sixth grade football. When parents are coaching, they tend to concentrate on their child only and will notice their child’s mistakes more noticeably as compared to other players on their respective team. Every child on the team should get the same amount of attention. Sometimes the perceived mistakes are not mistakes at all – the player is simply doing their assignment. At times, parents are extremely hard on their own children and players on their team when they make mistakes. Yelling negatively and blaming a player for losing a game are extreme examples, but can happen. Reacting negatively towards the player does not improve the situation when young players are already upset after a mistake. Communicating to their children and players in a positive way is extremely important. Parents who deliver their communication message positively can be more successful than those who are not able to adjust or change their communication approach.

Parents need to understand the difference between family communication and coach communication. Parents tend to continue communicating as a coach after practices and games. Parents taking the coach communication style home can be detrimental to their children. Several publications such as Journal of Sport Behavior and Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport highlight that once the game is over, parents need to act as a parent. Children need their parents to be supportive, not critical (Weiss & Fretwell, 2005). Parents need to learn to not cross the line between family communication and coach communication. Knowing the difference between family communication and coach communication will be included in the training curriculum.

**Definition of Terms**

The remaining chapters have many important terms that will be used. The following terms listed are some of the most significant:
Behavior Alteration Technique/Message: positive or negative communication messages given to a student or player designed to change or alter their behavior or reaction in certain situations.

Blocking: A block is an offensive player’s effort to move the defender out of their defensive position to create a running lane or passing lane for the offensive ball carrier.

Parent-Coach: A parent who coaches a sport with their child on the same team.

Tackling: A tackle is a desired collision between the defensive man and the offensive ball carrier, in which the objective is for the defensive man to stop the momentum of the offensive ball carrier and bring the offensive ball carrier to the ground.

Organization of Remaining Chapters

The remaining chapters are organized into four more chapters: Chapter two, the literature review, provides the theoretical framework for the argument that an introductory football coach training course is needed for parents that have limited to no experience coaching youth football. Chapter three, the scope and methodology, discusses the use of existing communication research along with parent and parent-coach interviews to build the curriculum for the training course. Chapter four displays the proposed football coach training curriculum for parents in a PowerPoint slide format with speaker notes. Finally, chapter five discusses the limitations of the project, suggestions for further areas of research, and summarizes the project.
CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Theoretical Basis

There is a substantial amount of literature in regards to communicating proper youth football techniques and enhancing communication when addressing player mistakes. The purpose of this project is to develop a training curriculum for proper blocking and tackling techniques and how to communicate resolutions to mistakes made by players in games and practices. This literature review will evaluate parents’ reflections on abusive coaching, young players’ perception of parental support, role of parental involvement in youth sports, the difficulties of the parent-coach, and how Behavior Alteration Techniques can be as the communication theory.

Some parents believe they have an appropriate amount of coaching experience to become an assistant coach or head coach of a youth football team. Others know they do not, but want to be involved. The problem is parents that want to help coach football may not have the level of experience or appropriate training to communicate proper football techniques and have the skill to communicate effectively when players make mistakes. Effectively communicating proper football techniques such as blocking and tackling can also help prevent injuries such as concussions.

Football is an extremely passionate game causing reactions to vary from fans, coaches, players, and parents. Parents’ reaction to mistakes made by players on the field can vary. Some parents may raise their voice towards the player, while others remain calm. To help communicate effectively to players that make a mistake, the players must know the proper techniques first. The players can develop incorrect techniques without the proper coaching from parents. In addition,
the players will not learn from their mistakes if the parents and coaches cannot communicate effectively with the players.

The Literature

The Parent-Coach Influence

Youth sports rosters fill-up as each sport gets closer to their respective seasons. It is not uncommon to find that one player and coach with the same last name (Barber, Sukhi, & White 1999). With more kids signing-up each year, there is a need for more coaches. Finding a coach is perceived to be a simple task. Parents are often used as coaches. The article titled “The Influence of Parent-Coaches on Participant Motivation and Competitive Anxiety in Youth Sport Participants” investigated the role that parents play in their children’s desire to play a sport, the pressure associated with performing well and their sport experience as a whole (Barber, Sukhi, & White 1999). The level of involvement from parents can vary. Some parents are coaches, while others watch from the stands. Parental involvement can range from under-involved to over-involved (Hellstedt, 1987). Over-involved parents are excessive in their involvement, while under-involved parents have limited involvement in their kid’s sport activities.

Early research has indicated that improving skills, having fun, being physically fit, making friends, and individual success were all important factors for participation (Gill, Gross, & Huddleston, 1983). Hellstedt (1990) investigated parental roles in influencing the sport experience in children and he proposes the influence from parents may have a positive or negative perception from their children. Parental influences that are perceived negatively by the child may have consequences. Perceived negative responses may lead to competitive anxiety, parent-child conflict, child not having fun, burnout from parental involvement, and withdrawal
from the sport (Passer, 1984). Scanlan and Lewthwaite (1986) on the other hand, suggest positive reactions from parents lead to greater enjoyment for athletes.

The purpose of Barber’s, Sukhi’s, and White’s study was to determine if parent-coached and non-parent-coached children varied on their motivation to participate in sports (1999). Both parent-coached and non-parent-coached children filled out questionnaires. The results from the questionnaire showed similarities and differences between parent-coached children and non-parent-coached children. Parent-coached children rated challenge, improve skills, and teamwork in their top ten reasons to participate in sports (Barber, Sukhi, & White 1999). On the other hand, non-parent-coached children rated learning new skills, getting exercise, and to be physically fit as more important reasons for participating in sports (Barber, Sukhi, & White 1999). Having fun rated number one for both parent-coached and non-parent-coached children. Parent-coaches and non-parent-coaches must be aware of why children play particular sports, so the coaches can incorporate into their practices and learning sessions.

**Difficulties of the Parent-Coach**

Parent-coaches face many challenges coaching their own children. The article titled “The Parent-Coach/Child-Athlete Relationship in Youth Sport: Cordial, Contentious, or Conundrum?” written by Maureen Weiss and Susan Fretwell (2005) highlight some of those challenges. The purpose of Weiss’ and Fretwell’s study was to gain knowledge about the parent-coach phenomenon in youth sports and if different issues would be raised about the unique parent-coach/child-athlete relationship. This article included the positive and negative aspects of parents coaching their sons. Several positive aspects of parent-coaches coaching their sons include taking pride in their son’s achievement, social interactions with other players and parents, quality time with their son, and opportunity to teach skills to players on their respective teams. Negative
aspects include rebellious behavior from the son towards the father-coach, higher expectations for the son versus other players, rewarding other players more versus their son, and the father having difficulty separating the coach role from the parent role.

Separating family communication from coach communication is difficult for parents. Weiss and Fretwell (2005) highlighted common themes in regards to coaches’ difficulty separating their coach role from their parent role. Sons may be unhappy from their father’s coaching decision. For example, parent-coaches may decide to move a player to their son’s position and move their son to another position. The decision may be best for the team, but the son may feel he was inadequate at his current position causing the son to unhappy. Another theme captured from Weiss’ and Fretwell’s (2005) study is that parent-coaches feel they cannot give their sons unqualified support. Parent-coaches find difficulty to show the same support as a parent watching from the stands. If a mistake is made by a parent-coach’s son, the parent-coach feels it is their duty to help their son fix the mistake like any other player, which means the parent role can be removed during those situations. The difficulty is parent-coaches struggle to show the same support if they were watching from the stands.

Weiss and Fretwell (2005) also mentioned the challenges of parent-coaches feeling they are not detached enough from their sons. When parent-coaches notice their son seems to be lacking effort in practice, the parent-coach can get more upset towards their son versus other players. As a result, the son feels upset and down on himself. Parent-coaches need to learn to separate their coach from their family role. Weiss and Fretwell (2005) discovered several recommendations for parent-coaches to deal with separating the coach role from the parent role: treat all players the same, take coaching classes, listen to what your child says, make sure coaching incorporates fun, think of your son as another player, parent-coaches should coach
because they love the game (not making the main purpose to coach their sons), and do not put high expectations on their sons.

Parents’ Reflections on Abusive Coaching

Gretchen Kerr and Ashley Stirling wrote an article in the *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* titled “Parents’ Reflections on their Child’s Experiences of Emotionally Abusive Coaching.” Kerr and Stirling performed a study where parents’ reflections indicated accepting disturbing coaching practices across their child’s athletic career (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). The support and nurturing from parents, coaches and teachers are important influences in youth athletic development (Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, Whalen, & Wong, 1993). Although coaches are important influences in young players’ athletic development, coaches use negative communication as well as positive communication (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). Coaches can be extremely passionate and use whatever it takes to accomplish success including questionable tactics. A growing number of studies are showing that coaches are mentally and verbally abusive (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). Yelling or making disparaging comments is quite common in sports, such as football. Athlete development strategies such as yelling or making disparaging comments are used for the purpose of toughening up or enhancing the resilience of athletes (Palframan, 1994). When parents witness the abusive approaches to their children, parents are unsure how to handle the situation. Parents often think about taking their children away from the particular sport where the coaches’ abusive behavior occurs. The dilemma parents face is that taking the sport away that their children love can also hurt their children. All of the parents interviewed in Kerr’s and Stirling’s study accepted the coaches’ behavior because the parents wanted to support their child’s dream (Kerr & Stirling, 2012).

Parents’ Relinquishing of Control. Early in their children’s sporting careers parents were asked to place a great deal of trust in the coach’s expertise and were expected to relinquish
a degree of control over to their child’s coach (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). In regards to putting trust in coaches, one parent in this study mentioned parents left the kids in the coaches’ hands. The parents were not there monitoring every drill or practice (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). Another parent mentioned the kids would be left with the coaches for training and parents trusted the coach and believed in the program the kids were put in (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). Parents were not allowed to watch practice and felt completely removed from the athletic development process of their own child. Another parent mentioned that once his child’s athletic career was over; he gave too much control over to the coaches and shouldn’t have allowed that to happen.

**Family Time Interference.** The amount of training and level of competition increases as the child moves into higher levels of competition. The child and family were required to make sacrifices in terms of other interests and time commitments (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). Family vacations are often altered to accommodate game and tournament schedules. School activities such as dances, spelling bees, and fund raisers often get eliminated from the young athlete’s schedule. Kerr and Stirling (2012) captured an extreme case from a hockey parent:

> When she got to a certain level there was a bigger commitment. They had so many practices a week and they had to travel. Her whole adolescence was hockey and sometimes I was concerned about what she was missing, like prom (p. 197).

As the level of time commitment intensified, the child’s unhappiness began to increase. When athletes would complain about their feelings, coaches would become more upset and question the child’s commitment level. In many cases, the unhappiness occurred as a result of trying to work through fear of performing certain skills in front of an irate coach (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). At this point, effective communication with the coach becomes extremely difficult.
Coach Communication Issues. When parents have a concern about a coaching practice or a child’s difficulties, parents usually address the coach. In the vast majority of these cases, the coach reportedly responded by emphasizing the process of becoming an elite athlete requires mental toughness, pain tolerance, make sacrifices and work through fear from intense training (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). Coaches’ job is to push the athlete to try their best and make sure the techniques being taught are learned and used in competition. Unfortunately, coaches often use yelling and criticism to accomplish their task of creating the best possible athlete in a particular sport (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). Coaches also communicate that if parents have any doubt about their child playing a particular sport, then the parents should reconsider their child playing. Kerr and Stirling (2012) also reported that at one point or another, their child’s coach had told them that their child would not be successful in the sport without him/her - the coach (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). This type of coaching behavior does not foster open communication. In fact, this behavior can cause parents and coaches to not talk at all and concerns go left unresolved creating an unhappy environment for the kids and parents. The lack of effective communication with players, coaches, and parents can be improved by using Behavior Alteration Techniques.

Behavior Alteration Techniques

In 1985, eighteen Behavior Alteration Techniques (BATs) were developed in a study by Patricia Kearney, Timothy Plax, Virginia Richmond, and James McCroskey in a Communication Education article titled “Power in the Classroom III: Teacher communication techniques and messages”. BATs can be categorized as positive or negative. An example of a positive BAT is "self-esteem" (number twelve in Appendix A) and the Behavior Alteration Message (BAM) would be “you will feel better about yourself if you do what I ask.” An example of a negative Behavior Alteration Technique is "guilt" (number six in Appendix A) and the Behavior
Alteration Message would be “if you don’t, others will be punished.” The “Power in the Classroom III” study indicated using positive BATs are more effective than negative BATs.

Consistent with the literature on power, teachers communicate particular bases of power to alter students’ behavior (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1985). According to Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McKroskey (1985), teachers must have power “potential” and must be able to “implement” that potential to consistently obtain student on-task behaviors in learning situations. The end result of the study developed a classification of BATs and representative BAMs that teachers can use to manage students in the classroom (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1985) found in Appendix A.

**Revised Behavior Alteration Techniques**

Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey continued their classroom series in the article titled “Power in the Classroom IV: Alternatives to Discipline.” The study was designed to explore the use of power in the classroom by expanding and refining BATs and BAMs that teachers report are representative of the classroom environment (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1984). The authors specifically researched discipline teachers used in the classroom. In early discussions, teachers were defined as dominating rulers and were expected to submit to teacher authority (Waller, 1932). Incorporating more rules and harsher penalties are not exactly the best tactic to implement in a learning environment. According to Coy, penalties in a learning environment can interfere with affective learning (Coy, 1980). Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey (1982) indicated the primary concern in this study were the available alternative teacher communication techniques that can be incorporated to control student behaviors and distractions for affective learning.
Teachers and coaches must be affective at limiting student disruptions to learning. For students to learn what is being taught, teachers and coaches should use “power-based strategies” (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1984). This article highlighted four strategies: coercive power, reward power, referent power and expert power. Coercive power originates from students' perceptions that they will be punished if they do not comply with the teacher’s instructions (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1984). Reward power is simply based on students’ perceptions that they will be rewarded if they comply with teachers’ directions (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1984). Referent power is based on the students’ desire to please the teacher (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1984). Expert power comes from the students’ desire to comply because they believe the teacher is the expert (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1984). This study highlighted that reward, referent, and expert power were used more than coercive power. However, reward power was not found to be meaningful with affective learning. Teachers and coaches gain more student compliance by creating an environment for the best possible learning. BATs offer a useful approach to achieving this objective through communication student-centered messages (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1984). The authors’ study was designed to validate and refine BATs. The original eighteen BATs created in “Power in the Classroom III” were refined and expanded to twenty-two BATs found in Appendix B. Here are some BAT examples that were refined:

- “Reward from Behavior” to “Immediate Reward from Behavior”
- “Personal Relationship-Positive” to “Teach-Student Relationship: Positive” and “Teach-Student Relationship: Negative”
- “Expert” to “Expert Teacher”
In the overall data gathered, Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey (1984) found the most effective BATs are *Immediate Reward from Behavior, Reward from Teacher, Self-Esteem,* and *Teacher Feedback.* In particular, *Deferred Reward from Behavior, Immediate Reward from Behavior, Legitimate Higher Authority, Reward from Teacher, Self-Esteem,* and *Punishment from Teacher* were found to be most effective with children in the fourth through eighth grade age group. These BATs will be considered for inclusion in the training curriculum.

**Communication Training and Learning**

Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey continued their behavior alteration techniques research in the article titled “Power in the Classroom V: Behavior Alteration Techniques, Communication Training and Learning.” The goal of this research was to increase student learning with teacher influence using behavior alteration techniques. The authors described the “Power in the Classroom V” study as designed to investigate the relationship between use of these BATs and student affective learning as well as the impact of communication training of teachers and student quality on differential use of the techniques (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1985). Four BATs (*Immediate Reward from Behavior, Deferred Reward from Behavior, Self-Esteem and Teacher Feedback*) were found to be positively associated with affective learning. The students saw no significant difference between trained and untrained teachers using those four techniques (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1985). This means that parents who are inexperienced coaches can also use these techniques with their players. These four BATs that are positively associated with affective learning can help parents communicate proper football techniques to players. In addition, players can retain more information from what coaches are teaching players. Five BATs identified as negative associations with affective learning are *Punishment from Teacher, Legitimate-Teacher Authority,*
Peer Modeling, Punishment for Others, and Responsibility to Class and Debt (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1985). Parents must use caution when considering using BATs that are considered negatively associated with affective learning. Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey reported BATs that are considered negatively associated with learning were highly used by untrained teachers (no formal communication training). It is assumed that parents can be ineffective coaches by incorporating BATs that are considered to affect learning negatively.

**Coaches’ Use of Behavior Alteration Techniques**

Matthew Martin, Kelly Rocca, Jacob Cayanus, and Keith Weber (2009) conducted a study summarized in “Relationship between Coaches’ use of Behavior Alteration Techniques and Verbal Aggression on Athletes’ Motivation and Affect” that investigated the impact of coaches’ use of BATs and verbal aggression on player motivation and affect for the coach. Although previous BAT studies were targeted towards teachers, coaches can also use BATs as teachers do. How coaches communicate with their players is similar to how teachers communicate with their students (Martin, Rocca, Cayanus, & Weber, 2009). Similar to teachers’ influence in the classroom, coaches have an influence on how players perform in practices and games. Given that how coaches communicate has a direct influence on how players perform and behave, there is a potential to identify how coaches can adapt their communication to be more effective with their players (Horn, 2009). The findings made by Horn (1985) provide support that communication skills are the most important skills for coaches to possess.

Athletes reported higher affective learning when they perceived the leadership behaviors of encouragement, offering social support, providing training and instruction, and giving positive feedback (Martin, Rocca, Cayanus, & Weber, 2009). Players that receive positive feedback on a consistent basis from coaches tend to increase their effort and play harder than players who
receive negative feedback. Negative feedback to players result in less teamwork among players. Smith, Fry, Ethington, and Li, (2005) found that when coaches provide positive feedback to their players, their players are more willing to work harder and sacrifice for the team while negative feedback was related to less teamwork amongst players on the team.

Positive and Negative Behavior Alteration Techniques for Coaches. Kearney and Plax (1997) argued that each of the BATs represents a category of messages designed to motivate, encourage, or foster alternative, on-task behaviors essential for learning. Knowing the difference between positive and negative BATs is important for coaches to understand in order to deliver the appropriate communication to players. An example of a positive BAT would be Immediate Reward from Behavior. This technique would describe the activity (football practice) as fun and a good experience. Another positive BAT example would be Self-Esteem. Self-Esteem would describe the player as the best person to perform a task (block a defender) or explaining to the player that he always does a good job. Other positive techniques include Deferred Reward from Behavior (this drill will help you in the game), Altruism (this will help your team if you do this blocking technique properly), or Reward from Teacher (you will not have to do conditioning if you play hard in practice).

An example of a negative BAT would be Punishment from Behavior. This technique would describe the result of a player not performing a particular task as a reason the team lost. Another negative BAT example would be Punishment from Teacher. Punishment from Teacher can be described as the player will not play in the game if he does not perform the correct blocking technique. Other negative BATs include Punishment from Others (your teammates will not like you if you do not perform the drill correctly), Guilt (if you do not use the proper
blocking technique, the quarterback will get hurt), or Teach-Student Relationship: Negative (the coach will be disappointed in you if you do not perform the drill correctly).

Although negative BATs can be effective when used appropriately, teachers and coaches can be viewed as more approachable and better at their occupation by using positive BATs. Students perceive their teachers to be friendlier when teachers use positive BATs (Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1986). Additionally, Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey (1987) reported that people considered to be good teachers used positive BATs more often, leading to greater affective learning, while people considered to be bad teachers used more negative BATs. In the player-coach relationship, when coaches use positive control instead of aversive control, players report greater liking for their coach, teammates and the sport (Turman, 2006).

**Rationale**

Parents often help coach youth football, but may not have the level of experience or appropriate training to communicate proper football techniques. Parents who have limited or no experience coaching youth football may not have the skill to communicate effectively when players make mistakes. Reactions can vary from coaches, fans, players and parents such as disconfirming communication. Parents that want to help coach youth football must communicate proper football techniques and effectively communicate to players when players make mistakes. Players can develop improper techniques, not learn from their mistakes and get down on themselves if parent-coaches are not communicating effectively.

Behavior Alteration Techniques (BATs) and Behavior Alteration Messages (BAMs) provide a solid framework to assist in communicating resolutions to mistakes made by players in games and practices. Incorporating BATs and BAMs in the training curriculum will also
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enhance the communication for parent-coaches. Additional studies have shown that BATs and BAMs can be used by coaches as well as teachers. The literature also highlighted that positive and negative BATs exist and it is important for parent-coaches to know the situations when to use a positive BAT or a negative BAT. This literature has indicated that parents’ reflections on abusive coaching, young players’ perception of parental support, role of parental involvement in youth sports, and the difficulties of the parent-coach are important factors to consider when building a training curriculum for parents interested in enhancing their coaching skills.

This study proposes to use the research in the literature review and interviews with parent-coaches, coaches, and parents to build the training curriculum. Below are the design questions for the training curriculum:

RQ1: What should be included in a training curriculum for parents that want to coach youth football?

RQ2: How do parents/coaches communicate effectively when coaching youth football blocking and tackling techniques?

RQ3: How should parents/coaches communicate when players make mistakes?
Chapter 3. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on parents’ ability to communicate proper blocking and tackling techniques in youth football and how to best communicate resolutions to mistakes made by players in games and practices. Although parents can be influential to young football players, parents need to learn how to communicate effectively. This project compares the interview comments from parents and parent-coaches. This project is limited to parents and parent-coaches residing in an urban township district located in Indianapolis, IN. The interview comments will assist in building the training curriculum needed for parents that want to coach football in the fifth through sixth grade age group.

The study began with evaluating a group of parents and parent-coaches that have significant experience in coaching or limited experience in coaching. Significant experience is defined as having more than five years of coaching experience. Limited experience is defined as having five years or less of coaching experience.

The parents and parent-coaches were interviewed to assist in determining the items to include in a football training curriculum along with validating the research in the literature review. Parents and parent-coaches who coached their sons on a team were required for this study. The parents and parent-coaches selected have sons playing youth football currently or have played football in the past. The same parents and parent coaches who also have daughters playing sports will be interviewed to help validate the research in the literature review.

Interview Population

Parents and parent-coaches, with various levels of coaching experience, were chosen to be interviewed. The selection criteria first began with parents and parent-coaches that have sons
playing football or have played football in the past. In addition, the rosters were compared to see if parents and parent-coaches had other children playing multiple sports or had daughters that played sports as well. A total of ten parents and parent-coaches were chosen. In addition to concentrating on football, gathering feedback from parents and parent-coaches that have children playing multiple sports would assist in broader validation for the literature review. The interviewees have sons that play football and/or play additional sports such as baseball, basketball, and hockey. In addition, three out of the ten parents and parent-coaches interviewed that have sons playing football also have daughters that play softball, tennis, and swimming.

**Methodology**

In addition to the literature review and theory, qualitative interviews will be used to collect information on what parents need to be effective communicators while coaching football fundamentals and when players make mistakes. An email was sent to the parents and parent-coaches asking for their participation in the interviews. Each participant responded with their permission to accept or decline participation.

Qualitative interviews will be conducted over the phone or face-to-face with parents and parent-coaches with various amounts of coaching experience. A combination of positivist, emotionalist, and constructionist research approaches will be used in this study. Positivist interview research approaches are interested in facts (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). In this study, the facts gathered are the sports the interviewees have coached, how long they have been coaching, what sport their child plays, how long their child has played organized sports and how long they have coached their child. Emotionalist interview research approaches consider interviews as a pathway to the interviewees’ real-life experiences (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). Examples in this study include asking the interviewees if they have witnessed a coach
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yelling negatively at a player. Constructivist interview research approaches focus on how meanings are produced where interviews resemble everyday conversations (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). Another important point in these kinds of interviews is that the researcher uses their pre-planned questions to initiate conversation, which can flow into many directions (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), it is often said that the positivist and emotionalist approaches are interested in ‘what’ questions and constructivist approaches are interested in ‘how’ questions. In this study, the interview questions will include both ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions. In many cases, the best research is done by combining the three approaches so the interview research includes both ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004).

Interviews

Interviews were scheduled via email upon the parents’ and parent-coaches’ acceptance to be interviewed. A total of ten interviews were conducted (nine over the phone and 1 face-to-face). Each parent and parent-coach were asked about how long they have been coaching; how long they have been coaching their own child; what sports they coached; have they witnessed a coach or parent reacting in a negative way; if they think there are parents coaching today that are not qualified; what parents need to communicate to player after a mistake occurs; and how do parent-coaches separate themselves from being a coach and a parent. Research questions (RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3) were also addressed in the interview: RQ1 - What should be included in a training curriculum for parents that want to coach youth football? RQ2 - How do parents/coaches communicate effectively when coaching youth football blocking and tackling techniques? RQ3 - How should parents/coaches communicate when players make mistakes?
To help the interviews to be more conversational in nature, interviews will be guided and semi-structured with open and closed questions. Guided and semi-structured interviews can be used to analyze both what and how questions (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). Prepared outlines of topics and questions are often used in guided and semi-structured interviews. In this study, an outline of questions for the interviews was prepared. Preparing a guided question outline prior to the interview helped guide the conversation, lead the interviewee to elaborate on their answers and share real-life examples. Appendix C highlights the questions and topics for the interviews. Notes will be taken during the interview and then summarized after the interviews. A summary of the interviews will list out common themes to include in the training curriculum.

**Data Analysis**

The literature was analyzed and summarized to identify common themes for training curriculum topics. In addition, the common themes were reviewed to compare with the interview responses. An Excel spreadsheet was used to list out the summation of the literature review along with all the interview responses and organize the data. Organizing data into conceptual categories and creating themes is known as coding qualitative data (Neuman, 2006). Coding data involves reducing the amount of data and categorizing the data. Open coding, axial coding, and selective coding are the three types of qualitative data coding. All three data coding approaches can potentially be used in this study in a three-step process. After analyzing all the responses from the interviews and the literature review summary, open coding is the first step in which a researcher examines the data to condense them into preliminary categories or themes (Neuman, 2006). Next, in axial coding, the researcher focuses on the initial coded themes from the open coding step (Neuman, 2006). Although, the researcher’s primary task is to review and examine
the initial themes, the researcher may recognize an opportunity for additional themes or combine themes. In the third step, selective coding is when a researcher examines previous codes to identify and select data that will support the conceptual coding categories that were developed (Neuman, 2006). Basically, selective coding is the final analysis of the themes and make comparisons and contrasts between the themes.

Validity. Upon completion of the qualitative coding steps, validity of the study will be conducted. Several types of validity exist, such as face validity, content validity, criterion validity, and concurrent validity. Face validity will be used in this study. Face validity is a judgment by experts in the community to validate that the themes from the interview responses support the literature review (Neuman, 2006). In this study, a High School head football coach will be used as the expert.

Justification

Interviews are used by several different types of researchers. Interviews are used extensively by mass media and professional services as well as practical and academic researchers (Gubrium and Holstein, 2001; Silverman, 2001). In this study, the majority of the interviews will be performed via telephone. Telephone interviews are the most popular interview method since ninety-five percent of the population can be reached by telephone (Neuman, 2006). Telephone interviews are more cost effective than face-to-face interviews (Neuman, 2006), especially in a smaller interview population similar to this study. In addition, the researcher can also control the sequence of questions and can probe as necessary during interviews (Neuman, 2006).
Ethical Considerations

Several ethical considerations were made for this study. Informed consent, voluntary participation, professional courtesy, confidentiality and plagiarism are all extremely important ethical considerations for this study.

**Informed consent.** Participants in the study should be informed about the purpose of the study and its basic procedures (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). In addition, the participants should know the role of the researcher and how the data will be used (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). It is assumed that participants feel more comfortable to participate when they have all the relevant information regarding the study.

**Voluntary participation.** In regards to voluntary participation, the parents and parent-coaches selected to be interviewed are not required to participate in the interviews. Participation in an interview is completely voluntary for the parents and parent coaches. Selected participants should know that they can refuse to participate in the interview and can withdraw from the study at any point (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008).

**Professional courtesy.** Each participant should receive equal professional courtesy. Participants should not be pressured or obligated to give a particular answer to questions. Regardless of the researcher’s opinion on the subject, participants should not be challenged on their answer to the interview questions. It is assumed that asking a question during the interview that is not relevant to the study would be considered unprofessional courtesy. The researcher must take professional courtesy seriously, including confidentiality.

**Confidentiality.** The participants’ confidentiality in this study should be the first priority and be respected in the research process (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). The identities and research records of participants in the research should be kept confidential (Eriksson and
Personal information, such as home addresses, phone numbers, etc. should be kept confidential as well.

Plagiarism. The Internet, electronic books, online articles, etc., make it easier to copy another’s work. When a researcher does not give acknowledgement to other researchers’ ideas, inventions, research work, written texts and publications, but use them as the researchers’ own and produce work of another person without crediting that person is considered plagiarism (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). Researchers must know the rules of proper citations to recognize work and ideas from original authors.

Results of the Study

A total of ten interviews were conducted with parents and parent-coaches. Two parents and eight parent-coaches were interviewed. The parents and parent-coaches all have children in the public and private school systems. The ten parents and parent-coaches averaged 5.1 years of coaching experience. The coaching experience of the parents and parent-coaches interviewed varied: two people interviewed had no years of coaching experience, four people had five years or less of coaching experience and four people had greater than five years of coaching experience. All ten people interviewed have one or more children of their own. There were a total of twenty-one children from the ten parents and parent-coaches interviewed. The years of coaching experience matched exactly to the number of years the parents and parent-coaches have coached their own children. A summary of coaching experience, sports coached by the parents and parent-coaches and the sports played by children of the parents and parent-coaches is displayed in Table 1 below.
Coding Data

Interview responses for the ten interviews were listed out in an excel spreadsheet and coded the qualitative data into different themes. Coding qualitative data involves reducing the amount of data and categorizing the data. Open coding, axial coding, and selective coding were the three types of qualitative data coding. Appendix D highlights each step in the qualitative data coding process. As mentioned earlier, open coding organizes the responses into preliminary themes. Summarizing the responses for each interview question was the main step in open coding. Next, axial coding was used to analyze the responses to further review, change, add, and/or combine themes. In axial coding, the number of themes was reduced from seven themes to three themes. The last step was to use selective coding, which is the final analysis of the themes and make comparisons and contrasts between the themes. Themes four, five, and seven from the axial coding step were analyzed to the final themes list. The research performed in the
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literature review and the final themes list contributed to creating the training curriculum topic list.

**Project Description**

Based on prior research and interview responses from parents and parent-coaches, it is clear there is a need for parents, who want to coach football with limited experience, to take a football training course that highlights proper blocking and tackling techniques and how to communicate resolutions to mistakes made by players in games and practices. To assist in meeting this need, a football coach training presentation was developed based on direct feedback from parents and parent-coaches along with the communication challenges and techniques used by teachers discovered in the literature research. The football coach training curriculum will be broken down into four modules that include understanding the basics of football, proper blocking and tackling techniques, differences between family and coach communication, and how to communicate effectively to players when mistakes occur. The football coach training curriculum is shared in Appendix E in presentation format (with speaker notes). Football coaches that have been coaching for decades continue to attend conferences to enhance their coaching skills. This one-day training course would serve as an introduction to football coach training for parents who want to start coaching youth football.

The course will be titled “Football Training Curriculum for Parents” and should be taken by parents who have limited to no experience coaching youth football that plan on coaching in the near future. The modules are listed below:

Module 1 - Understanding Football

Module 2 – Coaching Proper Football Techniques

Module 3 – Family vs. Coach Communication
Module 4 – Effective Communication Techniques

This training curriculum will introduce parents to the game of football, teach them proper blocking and tackling techniques, teach them the differences between a parent and a coach, and give them communication techniques to help improve their communication approach.

Discussion of the Project

The modules listed above were developed to enhance parents’ knowledge of the game of football, enhance their communication skills when teaching blocking/tackling techniques, and increase parents’ effectiveness when communicating resolutions to mistakes made by players. The major parts of each module are described as follows (Appendix E has the details for each module):

Module 1. Module 1 will introduce the basic topics that parents need to know to become more familiar with football. In this introduction, parents will learn the importance of taking the time to learn positions, rules, penalties, performing techniques themselves, referees role in football, knowing to set realistic expectations, and will learn to have an emergency plan when severe injuries occur.

It is assumed that parents have busy schedules with their jobs, home improvement projects and/or driving their children to several activities during the week. Taking the time to learn the game of football is an important first step for parents if they want to become an effective football coach. In this module, parents will learn the basic positions in football. Parents will be directed to learn the rules and penalties in their respective leagues that they will be coaching in. Parents will also be taught to learn the proper football techniques, meaning parents should actually perform the techniques themselves. In addition, watching professional videos of the techniques performed is also recommended.
Referees often get blamed for making mistakes in determining penalties. In this module, parents will learn that referees are a part of the game like players and coaches. Learning that referees are actually part of the game can be a difficult concept for parents to understand. Referees are there to make sure a fair game is played and not to determine outcomes of games.

It is assumed that most youth football coaches would enjoy going undefeated. This module will help parents set realistic expectations. Parents need to be cautious when setting expectations for their respective teams. Setting small goals each week is recommended to help give the young players a sense of accomplishment.

The game of football requires physical contact on virtually every play. Injuries occur in football more frequently than in any other sport (Boston Children’s Hospital, n.d.). Most of the injuries occur in contact and collision sports such as football (Boston Children’s Hospital, n.d.). As mentioned earlier, this training curriculum is targeted to the fifth and sixth grade age group. Sports injuries occur more frequently in children between the ages of five and fourteen (Boston Children’s Hospital, n.d.). The fifth and sixth grade age group falls into ages between five and fourteen. The final section of Module 1 will teach parents to have an emergency plan on how to react to severe injuries.

**Module 2.** This module will introduce proper blocking and tackling techniques. This module is focused on coaching proper blocking and tackling techniques. Although, there are many different kinds of tackling techniques and blocking techniques, this training curriculum is focused on the basic fundamentals instead of the different styles that may be used in different offenses and defenses. This module begins with tackling techniques. The first item covered is the definition of a tackle. Then, this module describes the fundamentals of a tackle using visual images. The last part of this module will recommend parents to spend time with a local high
school coaching staff to learn blocking and tackling drills that should be performed on a daily basis, help identify coaching qualification opportunities, and understand the differences between high school and youth football.

**Module 3.** This module is focused on family communication versus coach communication. Essentially, parents need to learn to separate their coach role from their parent role. This module describes three major steps to take to help the separation from a coach and a parent.

**Module 4.** This module is focused on effective communication techniques. These techniques can help enhance communication to players when players make mistakes in games or practices. The module then leads into what not to do. Football coaches can be extremely passionate, which can lead to extreme reactions, such as yelling. Yelling can discourage players’ efforts and can be perceived as insulting and offensive. This module discusses proactive ways to avoid yelling and inappropriate reactions to youth football players.

Behavioral Alteration Techniques (BATs) are communication techniques used to alter students’ (players in this case) behavior in the classroom (on the practice field) to stay on-task in learning situations (practices). This module also discusses positive and negative approaches to BATs. Knowing the difference between positive and negative BATs is important for coaches to understand in order to deliver the appropriate responses to players when mistakes occur. This module also has the parents practice the positive and negative BATs with a partner. The last section of this module mentions how positive BATs are preferred over negative BATs.

**Outcomes and Implications.** Throughout this training course, each module focuses on the desired outcomes from the parent and parent-coach interviews along with the research from the literature review. Activities, such as, spending time with a local high school coaching staff...
and practicing BATs, was developed as a first of many steps to enhance the basic football knowledge and communication skills for parents with limited to no coaching experience in youth football.

Each module has its own targeted outcome. In Module 1, the outcome for parents is to become more knowledgeable via a basic football introduction. The outcome for Module 2 is to learn the basic definition and technique of a tackle and a block. Learning different ways to separate the coach role from the parent role is the main outcome of Module 3. The outcome in Module 4 is for parents to enhance their communication skills when addressing player mistakes by using BATs. Upon completion of all modules, parents should be more comfortable in their football knowledge and confident in their communication skills.
Hello Everyone!! My name is Jim Knight and I will be taking you through “Football Training Curriculum for Parents”. The purpose of this training is to train parents that are interested in coaching football that have limited experience. I want to congratulate each of you for taking this one-day introductory step in becoming better coaches and communicators. This training curriculum focuses on coaching proper blocking and tackling techniques and how to communicate resolutions to mistakes made by players in games and practices for the fifth and sixth grade age group. There are four modules that I will take you through. (Go to next slide) (Pictures are captured from an actual youth football game. The pictures were taken by Jim Knight. The target player pictured is Jim Knight's son)
The four modules that I will be taking you through are Understanding Football, Coaching Proper Football Techniques, Family vs. Coach Communication, and Effective Communication Techniques.

In Module 1, Understanding football includes learning techniques, positions, rules, setting realistic expectations, etc. Module 2 will highlight the proper blocking and tackling techniques. Module 3 discusses how to separate from being a coach and a parent. Module 4 gives you effective communication techniques that have been used in research and help you communicate with your players.
There are several things you can do to improve your understanding of football. Let’s start with making the time to learn.
Make Time to Learn

- Know the positions, rules, penalties
- Learn the techniques (do them yourself)
- Referees play a role in football
- Set realistic expectations
- Have an emergency plan

As parents, we are all busy. We work, drive our kids everywhere, we go on vacation, etc. If you truly are dedicated to coaching football, then you need to make the time to learn the game. Let’s start with knowing positions, rules, and penalties.
Here is a list of the basic youth football positions and their abbreviations. I will now draw these positions on the board according to how they would be on football field. Once you understand where these positions are lined up on the football field, you will need to understand the job of each position depending on the type of defense and offense your team runs.

On the next slide, the positions are drawn out as if they were on the field.
The responsibility of each Offensive position is briefly described in a basic I-Formation:

- QB receives the ball from the C, throws passes to the WR or hands the ball off to the RB.
- RBs and FBs receive hand-offs from the QB, catches passes from the QB, or blocks.
- WRs and TEs block on run plays and catch passes from the QB.
- C snaps the ball to the QB.
- RG, LG, RT, and LT are offensive linemen that block for the QB on passing plays and block for RBs and FBs on running plays.
The responsibility of each Defensive position is briefly described in a basic 4-3 Defense:

- DTs attempt to stop the offensive linemen from creating running lanes for the RBs and FBs and try to get past the offensive linemen on pass plays to tackle the QB before he throws a pass.
- DEs defend the outside edges to avoid the offense running outside run plays and also try to get past the offensive linemen on pass plays to tackle the QB before he throws a pass.
- MLB and OLBs are the primary tacklers on running plays, cover WRs/RBs/FBs on passing plays and can also try to tackle the QB passing plays.
- Cs primary job is to cover WRs and TEs on passing plays and assist on run plays.
- FSs and SSs are the final line of defense most of the time to help cover WRs/RBs/FBs on passing plays and assist on run plays.

For more details on different offenses and defenses, visit usafootball.com for details.
Football Rules and Penalties

- League rules may vary
  - Understanding rules is critical

- Penalties called by referees may vary
  - Referees are human beings

- Gain Credibility

Each youth football league may vary in rules. Knowing your leagues’ rules is critical in coaching a youth football team. Rules, such as number of plays each player must play and weight limits for players that can carry the ball, are examples of important rules to know as a coach. Knowing the positions, rules and penalties will help you gain credibility with the players and parents.

In addition, you must learn techniques that can make your team better (go to next slide).
Learn the Techniques

- View videos of proper techniques
- Do the techniques yourself
- Before coaching your team, teach the techniques to someone who does not play football

As a coach, you must learn the techniques you are going to teach in practices. One way to learn the techniques are to view professional videos from credible coaches; similar to a benchmarking exercise. Watching the professional videos can also help view how different coaches teach techniques.

Players learn by doing over and over again in practices. Whether you are teaching new techniques or old techniques, you should perform the techniques yourself. Once you have repeated the techniques several times, try teaching to someone that has not played football to test your teaching skills.
Referees are a part of the Game

- Referees get the blame

- Referees are included in the game
  - Difficult concept to understand

- Referees are there to make sure game is played fair

- Referees will make mistakes

At times, referees tend to be regarded as hindrances to the game. And Referees can be blamed for the game outcome. You will have to learn that Referees are a part of the game just like the players and coaches. Learning that referees are actually part of the game can be a difficult concept for parents to understand. Referees are there to make sure a fair game is played, not to determine outcomes of games. Mistakes will be made not only by players and coaches, but by referees as well.
Everybody wants to win. Most youth football coaches would enjoy going undefeated. But, you, the parents, need to set realistic expectations. Parents need to be cautious when setting expectations for their respective teams. If your team loses the first game of the season and your goal at the beginning of the season was to go undefeated, then your players might feel they failed already after the first game. Remove wins and losses from the expectations.

Small goals are important. Setting small goals each week is recommended to help give the young players a sense of accomplishment. Examples of small goals include less than 3 penalties each game or get 5 first downs per game. Be careful not to lose focus from your team early in the season. Remember, this is 5th and 6th grade football players – Set small attainable goals, so there is a sense of accomplishment regardless of winning or losing the game.
Have an Emergency Plan

- Football requires physical contact
- Football Injuries occur more frequently
- Most injuries occur in contact sports
- 5th and 6th graders are prime targets for injuries

The game of football requires physical contact on virtually every play. Injuries occur in football more frequently than in any other sport.

Parents must have an emergency plan on how to react to severe injuries. As mentioned earlier, this training curriculum is targeted to the fifth and sixth grade age group. Sports injuries occur more frequently in children between the ages of five and fourteen (Boston Children’s Hospital, n.d.). The fifth and sixth grade age group falls into ages between five and fourteen. Most of the injuries occur in contact and collision sports such as football (Boston Children’s Hospital, n.d.).

The next slide highlights an example of an emergency plan.
Injuries occur in football. A well-organized youth football coach should always have an emergency plan. Once an injury occurs, the coaching staff needs to assess the seriousness of the injury. If a severe injury (broken bone, loss of consciousness, etc.) has occurred, call 911. Communicate to 911 who you are, where you are located and what injury has occurred. The 911 personnel will direct you to prepare the athlete for ambulance arrival. An example of preparing for ambulance arrival might be to have the athlete be flat on the ground with no movement. Once the 911 call is over and the athlete is prepared for ambulance arrival, then a coaching staff member must call the parent or guardian of the injured player.
Welcome to Module 2 of Football Coach Training Curriculum for Parents. This module is focused on coaching proper blocking and tackling techniques. Although, there are many different kinds of tackling techniques and blocking techniques, this training curriculum is focused on the basic fundamentals instead of the different styles that may be used in different offenses and defenses.

(Left picture captured from colts.com and right picture captured from www.colts.com)

(Right picture from http://www.google.com/search?q=football+blocking+pictures&hl=en&tbs=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=00hEUbaYDYYar2QXzu4DgBg&ved=0CC0QsAQ&biw=1008&bih=569)
Module 2

- Proper Tackling Techniques
- Proper Blocking Techniques
- Learn from a local high school coaching staff

Although this module focuses on learning fundamental tackling and blocking techniques, it is highly recommended that you spend time with a local high school coaching staff to learn the different tackling and blocking drills to run in practices. It is also highly recommended to ask a local high school coaching staff what the main differences are between coaching high school-aged players and youth-aged players (5th and 6th aged players in this case)
Proper Tackling Technique

- **Definition**

- **Fundamentals**
  - Head Up
  - Breakdown Position
  - Hit Position
  - Arm Rip
    - Both arms up motion, bring head up naturally
  - Aim tackle point at shoulders
    - Eliminates leading head
  - Open hips and drive

Before jumping into the actual techniques, it is important to know the definition of a tackle. A tackle is a desired collision between the defensive man and the ball carrier, in which the objective is for the defensive man to stop the momentum of the ball carrier and bring the ball carrier to the ground.

The next two slides highlight fundamentals when making a tackle.
Proper Tackling Technique

- Head Up and Breakdown position

In order to start a proper tackling technique, the defender (on the right in the picture) should have his head up. Having the head up helps to see the ball carrier better as well as getting ready for the break down position. The break down position helps the defender create leverage by being lower than the ball carrier and prepares for the next step in proper tackling technique, which is the arm rip.

Picture captured from -
http://www.americanfootballmonthly.com/Subaccess/articles.php?article_id=5905=article
Proper Tackling Techniques

- **Arm Rip**
  - Both arms up motion
  - Brings head up naturally

Once in the break down position, then immediately thrust hips forward with the arm rip around the ball carrier (arms thrusting up). This also helps bring the head up helping to lessen the chance of a concussion. You will get to see this performed at your local high, which will be discussed later.

Let’s now transition to blocking.

(Picture captured from usafootball.com)
Proper Blocking Technique

- **Definition**
- **Fundamentals**
  - Proper Stance
    - Good feet placement
  - Head Up
  - Fast Start
  - Good Hand Placement upon contact
  - Drive the opponent backwards

Just as we discussed in tackling - Before jumping into the actual techniques, it is important to know the definition of a block. A block is a player’s effort to move the defender out of their defensive position to create a running lane for the ball carrier.

The key word here is “move”. The objective is to move the defender backwards to create space for the ball carrier to run forward and gain offensive yards.

The next slides will highlight the fundamentals of blocking.
The three-point stance is the basic football stance. The three point stance is having both feet touching the ground and the dominant hand on the ground placed slightly forward ahead of the shoulders. The head is slightly up to see the defender. This example highlights the Tight End position as the blocker.

(Picture captured from Jim Knight’s camera – the Tight End in the picture is Jim Knight’s son)
Proper Blocking Techniques

- Fast start
- First short step

As soon as the ball is snapped, the blocker needs to get off to a fast start – need to get first two steps before the defender. From the picture shown, the ball is snapped and you can see the blocker highlighted is off to a quickest start before the other offensive players and the defender. Building momentum quicker than the defender will increase the chance of moving the defender from their position, which as you recall is the objective.

Another item to point out is that the blocker is also implementing a first short step, which increases the blocker’s chance to build momentum and get in more steps in before contacting the defender.

(Picture captured from Jim Knight’s camera – the Tight End in the picture is Jim Knight’s son)
Once contact is initiated, the blocker (player on the right) needs to get his hands inside to secure the defender. The player on the right places his hands on the inside of the defender’s shoulder (on the chest). If you look closely, the defender is not in a good position as his left leg is further back from his right leg – this is an advantage for the blocker.

The blocker has now established position and is ready to drive the defender backwards.

Photo captured from:
Proper Blocking Techniques

- Drive the opponent backwards

Once the blocker has established inside hand position, the blocker now begins to push the defender backwards.

Photo captured from - http://coachchrisfore.wordpress.com/tag/stalk-blocking/
Learn From Higher Levels

- Spend time with local high school coaching staff
  - Learn blocking and tackling drills
  - Coaching staff to explain why the drills are performed daily.
  - The drills will be demonstrated on a practice or game field.
  - Parents will have the opportunity to ask questions throughout each demonstration.

Parents will spend time with a local high school coaching staff to learn blocking and tackling drills that should be performed on a daily basis. The high school coaching staff will also explain why the drills are performed daily (contribute to muscle memory). High school players will be recommended to be used to demonstrate each drill numerous times. The drills will be demonstrated on a practice or game field. Parents will have the opportunity to ask questions throughout each demonstration. Once the outside activities are completed, the local high school coaching staff will take the parents inside in a classroom setting. In the classroom, the coaching staff will identify coaching qualification opportunities, and understanding the differences between high school and youth football.
Welcome to Module 3 of Football Coach Training Curriculum for Parents. This module is focused on family communication versus coach communication.
As a parent-coach, you now have to learn to separate your coach role from your parent role. It is assumed that when you coach your own child, your child can interpret your coaching to him as he is doing a bad job. There are 3 major things you can do to help separate your coach role from your parent role:

1. Utilize other coaches. If your son makes a mistake, have another coach communicate the corrective action to your son.

2. As a head coach or assistant coach, coach a different position from what your son plays. For example, if your son plays an offensive position, then coach a defensive position.

3. Once practice ends or the game is over, take your “coach hat” off and put your “parent hat” on. You want your son to see you as “Dad” and not “Coach”.

Now let’s transition into the last module, which is “Effective Communication Techniques”
Welcome to Module 4 of Football Coach Training Curriculum for Parents. This module is focused on effective communication techniques. It can be difficult communicating to youth football players when they make mistakes, but there are techniques you can use to be more effective as communicators when coaching corrective actions to mistakes made in practice or games.
How to communicate to players when mistakes happen

- Yelling – not the answer
- Get to know
  - All players individually
  - How each player responds to criticism

Let’s start with what not to do. The support and nurturing from parents, coaches and teachers are important influences in youth athletic development (Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, Whalen, & Wong, 1993). Although coaches are important influences in young players’ athletic development, coaches use negative communication as well as positive communication (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). Coaches can be extremely passionate and use whatever it takes to accomplish success including questionable tactics. A growing number of studies are showing that coaches are mentally and verbally abusive (Kerr & Stirling, 2012). Yelling or making disparaging comments is quite common in sports, such as football. Athlete development strategies such as yelling or making disparaging comments are used for the purpose of toughening up or enhancing the resilience of athletes (Palframan, 1994). Although yelling is used in sports, it does not mean that it is 100% effective. Yelling can discourage players’ efforts and can be perceived as
insulting and offensive. And in some cases, players may choose to quit the team or parents may direct their child to quit the team.

Instead of yelling at your players, get to know your players individually. Get to know what they are interested in outside of football, know how each player reacts to criticism, and know what communication techniques work for each individual player.

References:


As we all know, players make mistakes in competition, at all levels. Behavior Alteration Techniques are communication techniques used to alter students’ (players in this case) behavior in the class room (on the practice field) to stay on-task in learning situations (practices).

Additional studies have shown that BATs can be used by coaches as well as teachers. BATs can be used to communicate to players when they make mistakes. Often, players get frustrated and tend to lose focus – BATs are used to re-focus players and alter the frustration to a positive experience. There are positive and negative approaches to BATs. In the next few slides, examples of positive and negative approaches are highlighted.
Positive BATs

- Immediate Reward from Behavior
- Self-Esteem
- Deferred Reward from Behavior
- Altruism
- Reward from Teacher

*Practice BATs with a partner*

Knowing the difference between positive and negative BATs is important for coaches to understand in order to deliver the appropriate communication to players. An example of a positive BAT would be *Immediate Reward from Behavior*. Young athletes are not always excited to go to practice. Coaches can communicate to players that “practice helps you get better” and “we will have fun today.” This technique would describe the activity (football practice) as fun and a good experience.

Another positive BAT example would be *Self-Esteem*. Players often struggle to perform after making mistakes. *Self-Esteem* would describe the player as the best person to perform a task (block a defender) or explaining to the player that he always does a good job. This technique can help the player to forget about the mistakes made and concentrate on how important they are to the team.
The next positive technique includes *Deferred Reward from Behavior*. This is communicating reward from behavior, but the communicated reward is received at a later time. Players often get frustrated with performing the same drills over and over again because they keep making mistakes in the same drill. The same drills may be performed every day in practice over and over again, but the coach communicates that “this drill will help you in the game.”

*Altruism* is another communication technique that helps the coach encourage the player’s commitment to his team. For example, a player has continued to make mistakes in their blocking technique, but is very comfortable with that particular technique. The coach wants this player to use a different technique to help improve the blocking for the ball carrier, but the player is resistant because he is afraid to make another mistake. The coach can communicate “this will help your team if you do this blocking technique properly.”

There are other positive communication techniques, but the last one to be discussed in this training will be *Reward from Teacher*. Players often will get frustrated with running new plays, because mistakes often happen when running plays for the first time. Coaches can communicate, “If you run this play correctly, you will not have to do conditioning at the end of practice.”

Now, let’s take some time and work with a partner to practice positive BATs. Now that we covered several positive BATs, let’s now cover negative BATs.
Negative BATs

- Punishment from Behavior
- Punishment from Teacher
- Punishment from Others
- Guilt

Teacher-Student Relationship: Negative

Practice BATs with a partner

An example of a negative BAT would be *Punishment from Behavior*. This technique would describe the result of a player not performing a particular task as a reason the team lost. Essentially, if a player made a mistake during the game, a coach would blame the player as why their team lost. Obviously, not the best method to motivate your players.

Another negative BAT example would be *Punishment from Teacher*. *Punishment from Teacher* can be described as the player will not play in the game if he does not perform the correct blocking technique.

The next negative BAT is *Punishment from Others*. In this technique, coaches state “your teammates will not like you if you do not perform the drill correctly” This technique is putting peer pressure on the player. Not the best technique to use for youth football players.
Guilt is another communication technique to make the players feel inappropriately obligated to perform a task. For example, a coach could communicate “if you do not use the proper blocking technique, the quarterback will get hurt.”

There are other negative communication techniques, but the last one to be discussed in this training will be Teach-Student Relationship: Negative. In this technique, the coach would say “I will be disappointed in you if you do not perform the drill correctly.” Again, not the best technique to use for youth football players.

Now, let’s take some time and work with a partner to practice positive BATs.

The negatives BATs mentioned are strongly not suggested to use with 5th and 6th grade football players. The next slide highlights why positive BATs are preferred over negative BATs.
Positive BATs Preferred

- Coaches are viewed as:
  - More approachable
  - More friendly
  - Competent as coaches

- Positive BATs lead to greater affective learning

- Coaches that use positive BATs, have better relationships with their players

Although negative BATs can be effective when used appropriately, teachers and coaches can be viewed as more approachable and better at their occupation by using positive BATs. Students perceive their teachers to be friendlier when teachers use positive BATs (Plax, Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1986). Additionally, Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey (1987) reported that people considered to be good teachers used positive BATs more often, leading to greater affective learning, while people considered to be bad teachers used more negative BATs. In the player-coach relationship, when coaches use positive control instead of aversive control, players report greater liking for their coach, teammates and the sport (Turman, 2006).

References:

Thank you for taking the first step in pursuing your journey to coach youth football.

Understanding the football basics, coaching proper techniques, separating family from coach communication, and using positive behavioral alteration techniques are all important contributors to help you become more knowledgeable coaches.

Continue to pursue other learning opportunities to further your football education.

Based on feedback and high media coverage, bonus training material is added for Concussion Training.

Good luck this upcoming season!!!
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

Limitations of the Study

Along with the literature review, interview feedback was used to help build the training curriculum. One limitation to this project involves the limiting of interview feedback from parents and parent-coaches to one school district. Many other school districts in the United States have several decades of sports tradition. Texas, Florida, and California are examples of states where the interviews could have been expanded. There is a possibility of variable feedback across different school districts within different states.

A second limitation to this project involves limiting the importance of techniques to only football. Although there were several parents and parent-coaches interviewed that had children playing multiple sports, football was the focus of this project. It is also assumed that other sports, such as baseball, basketball, hockey, softball, and gymnastics also require players to learn specific techniques and that communication to players after a mistake occurs may be challenging for parents and parent-coaches.

The last limitation is the number of techniques mentioned in the training curriculum. Although blocking and tackling are fundamental techniques taught in football, there are many other techniques that are taught such as positional techniques. Positional techniques include linebacker pass-drops, linebacker block shedding, wide receiver pass route running, defensive end bull rush, etc. Essentially, the communication methods mentioned in chapter two can be used to communicate other football techniques.

Recommendations for Further Study

Additional research regarding communicating to players when mistakes occur in other sports is one recommendation. In this project, the interviews with parents and parent-coaches were focused on football. It is recommended that additional interviews with parents and parent-coaches from different school districts be conducted to gather a broader perspective on the communication methods used in football.
FOOTBALL COACH TRAINING CURRICULUM TRAINING FOR PARENTS

coaches be performed regarding other sports. Including other sports in the research can help validate if the lack of effective communication to players when mistakes occur is universal or not.

The target audience of the training curriculum was for parents with limited to no experience coaching football. Another recommendation would be to include other training courses. After a parent has coached for a full football season or several seasons, advanced training courses for more experienced parent-coaches could be given as supplemental training. Continuous learning is popular in the coaching profession. A local High School football coach in Indianapolis that has coached for more than twenty years attends ten to fifteen advanced training courses and/or seminars each off-season.

Although Behavioral Alteration Techniques (BATs) were identified as the communication technique to use when players make mistakes, it is assumed other existing communications techniques exist. It is assumed other more recent communication techniques can be equally effective as BATs to players when mistakes occur. The final recommendation would be to expand the research to include additional recent communication techniques in the research.

Conclusions

A football coach training need has been identified to assist parents with limited to no experience that want to coach youth football. Coaching youth football can be extremely challenging for parents and parent-coaches. Remaining calm in the face of adversity or when players make mistakes is a challenge for coaches. Yelling or making disapproving comments to players can be common in coaching football. Kerr & Stirling (2012) discovered that a growing number of studies are showing that coaches are mentally and verbally abusive. Another study performed by Palframan (1994) indicated that athlete development strategies such as yelling or making disparaging comments are used to toughen up or enhance the resilience of athletes. The
parent and parent-coach interviews performed in this study indicated that yelling and making disparaging comments towards players is not an effective method to use in youth sports, especially football.

The literature review, found in chapter two, found there are communication techniques such as BATs that can be used to effectively communicate with players. Authors, such as Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey developed a series of studies called Power in the Classroom III, IV, V, VI, and VII. The Power in the Classroom studies highlighted communication techniques called Behavior Alteration Techniques (BATs). Many examples of BATs (highlighted in chapter two) can be used as an effective communication technique when youth football players make mistakes. Once parents become more effective in their communication, gaining knowledge of basic blocking and tackling football techniques is the next step.

The goal of this project is to develop a curriculum that helps parents become better football coaches and communicators with young football players. Parents are the main beneficiaries of this curriculum. The literature review and interviews with parents and parent-coaches helped develop the “Football Coach Training Curriculum for Parents.” If parents truly make improvements to their communication approach and how they teach their players proper football blocking and tackling techniques, young football players can also benefit from this project. Players can develop proper football techniques and learn that mistakes are learning experiences. If parents truly change their communication approach, the game of football could be more enjoyable for young football players in the fifth and sixth grade age group.
Reference List


Kinetics.


Appendix A

Table captured from “Power in the Classroom III: Teacher Communication Techniques and Messages” on page 23.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BATs</th>
<th>BAMs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reward from Behavior</td>
<td>You will enjoy it. You will get a reward if you do. It will make you happy. It will help you. You will benefit if you do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Reward from Others</td>
<td>Others will think highly of you if you do. Others will like you if you do. Others will respect you if you do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Punishment from Source</td>
<td>I will punish you if you don’t. I will make it miserable for you if you don’t. I will continue doing bad things to you if you don’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Referent-Model</td>
<td>This is the way I always do it. People who are like me do it. People you respect do it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Legitimate-Higher Authority</td>
<td>Do it, I’m just telling you what I was told. It is a rule, I have to do it and so do you. I don’t know why, you just have to do it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Guilt</td>
<td>If you don’t, others will be hurt. If you don’t others will be unhappy. Others will be harmed if you don’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reward from Source</td>
<td>I will give you a reward if you do. I will make it beneficial to you if you do. I will continue to reward you if you do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Normative Rules</td>
<td>Everyone else does it. We voted, and the majority rules. Society expects you to do it. All of your friends are doing it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>It is your responsibility. It is your obligation. There is no one else that can do it. People are depending on you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Expert</td>
<td>From my experience, it is a good idea. From what I have learned, it is what you should do. This has worked for me, it should work for you too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Punishment from Behavior</td>
<td>You will lose if you don’t. You will be punished if you don’t. You will be unhappy if you don’t. You will be hurt if you don’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Self-Esteem</td>
<td>You will feel good about yourself if you do. You are the best person to do it. You are good at it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Debt</td>
<td>You owe me one. It’s your turn. You promised to do it. I did it the last time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Personal Relationship-Negative</td>
<td>I will dislike you if you don’t. I will lose respect for you if you don’t. I will think less of you if you don’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Altruism</td>
<td>If you do this it will help others. Others will benefit if you do. It will make others happy if you do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Personal Relationship-Positive</td>
<td>I will like you better if you do. I will respect you if you do. I will think more highly of you if you do. I will appreciate you more if you do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Duty</td>
<td>Your group needs it done. Our group depends on you. Our group will be hurt if you don’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Legitimate-Personal Authority</td>
<td>Because I told you to. Just do it. You have to do it, it’s required. You don’t have a choice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Table captured from “Power in the Classroom IV: Alternatives to Discipline” on page 49.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior Alteration Techniques and Revised Messages for College Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technique</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Immediate Reward from Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Deferred Reward from Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Reward from Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reward from Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Self-Esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Punishment from Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Punishment from Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Punishment from Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Teacher/Student Relationship: Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Teacher/Student Relationship: Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Legitimate-Higher Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Legitimate-Teacher Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Personal (Student) Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Responsibility to Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Normative Rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Debt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Altruism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Peer Modeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Teacher Modeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Expert Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Teacher Feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C – Interview Guide

**Facts**
- How long have you been coaching?
- What sports have you coached?
- How long have you coached your child?
- What sports does your child play?
- How long has your child played organized sports?

**Experiences**
- Have you witnessed parents or coaches act in a negative way? (example – yelling, ridiculing, etc.)
- Do you think there are parents coaching today that are not qualified or have limited experience?
- Do these same coaches teach proper football fundamentals like blocking and tackling?
- How do you separate yourself from being a coach and a parent?

**Training and Communication**
- What do parents need to communicate effectively when coaching youth football blocking and tackling techniques?
- What do parents need to communicate properly when players make mistakes?
- What should be included in the training curriculum?

**Additional Comments**
- Are there any other comments you would like to add?
Appendix D – Qualitative Data Coding

OPEN CODING – Preliminary Themes

Parents or coaches acting in a negative way.
- Yelling all the time, Yelling at kids for making an error, Yelling at player for not wanting to make contact in practice
- Negative attitude with no positive reinforcement
- Parents disagree with coaches decisions
- Parents upset about their child’s playing time
- Parents have a hard time letting go to have someone else coach their child

Parents coaching today that are not qualified or have limited experience.
- YES - a lot of parents are coaching to self-promote their own kids
- If you are not helping coach or involved, your kids will probably not play
- YES - caused one coach to switch leagues
- YES, had to vote in all coaches that applied to coach. Several coaches would be considered as not qualified.
- YES, a highly qualified was asked to coach a travel team, but did not have the time. A parent ended up coaching travel and could not handle it because of the intense high level competition
- YES, parents do not take the time to learn the sport. Coaching youth sport is different - high school does not apply to youth football. See more unqualified than qualified coaches
- YES, happens more in football than any other sport. Football is focused on techniques. Youth players get yelled at, but are not taught proper techniques.

Coaches not teaching proper football fundamentals like blocking and tackling.
- There are many teams where kids do not know blocking assignments and do not understand blocking techniques.
- No, but it is possible with the right training. In coaching, experience rules everything. Coaches think they know more than they do, proper training becomes important
- No, parent-coaches do not focus on proper techniques and concentrate on plays instead of fundamentals.
- Some teach proper techniques, but many do not and can see the results in players' performance.
- Many coaches do not how to run a simple play. Witnessed coaches actually draw up in dirt (parent coached for 5 years in youth football).

Communicate effectively when coaching youth football blocking and tackling techniques.
- Requires repetition…do same drills every day as muscle memory.
- Let the coaches coach. Do not need to be negative. Stay positive or kids will lose focus
- Knowing fundamental blocking and tackling techniques. Know the difference between high school and youth techniques.
- Communication techniques to teach proper techniques
- Communication approaches to resolve mistakes made by the players
Parents need to communicate properly when players make mistakes.

- Need to know all the players and need to separate yourself from your own child.
- The coach is harder on their own child. Focus on instructing and teaching. Do not focus on referees, focus on what happened and how the player performed and identify mistakes that need to be corrected.
- Get to know how each player responds to criticism. Have to take a different tact for each player.
- Encouragement, player already knows what they did wrong – “just move on” – do not need to point out the obvious. Teach them how to fix the problem instead of yelling.
- Adapt communication approach to each player. For example, some players can handle being yelled at while others do not handle it very well.
- Parents need to learn that mistakes will happen. Having a list of communication approaches would help parents communicate more effectively.
- Parents need to pay attention at practice on what is exactly being taught. Parents are good communicators when they know what the team is trying to teach. It is a great way for the players to bond with their parents.

Separate from being a coach and a parent.

- Do not coach your own kid – have another person coach your kid. For example, if your kid plays on offense, then go coach defense.
- Treat your son as another player
- Every kid can’t play quarterback. If your child is not qualified to play quarterback, have another coach communicate that message to your child.
- Some parents think their sons are the best on the team, which may not be the case and treats their son better than the other players. Need to treat all players (including your son) the same.
- Do not treat your son differently from other players
- Have another coach work with your child on correcting mistakes - Players interpret communication from parents differently as compared to another coach on the same team.
- This is extremely difficult – need to learn to treat your son like any other player and not call him out continuously in front of the team
- Treat every player the same. Take your coaching hat off as soon as you get in the car after practice or a game.

Training curriculum topics.

- Take training class or ask for help from experienced coaches (take a qualification course)
- Know the rules
- Do not put unrealistic expectations on your team
- Work on techniques daily – even if the drills are the same every day. This helps with muscle memory.
- Know the rules and penalties
- Safety – know what to do in emergencies (concussions, injuries, CPR, etc.)
- Coaching demeanor should be the same when practices and games are going good or bad
- Know your kids where they are at in development, know when to move fast and move slow
- Proper techniques must be taught
• Communication with the players and parents is extremely important. Build relationships with players. Need to use appropriate communication approaches with players that make mistakes
• Go to practices at a higher level and watch what high school coaches are doing to help players get ready for higher levels of competition
• Proper techniques and safety (concern with concussion signs, proper techniques to prevent injury frequency). Injuries happen because proper techniques are not taught
• Communication techniques to handle good situations and bad situations. In bad situations, have communication techniques that are effective to correcting players’ mistakes and/or behavior.
• Parents need to learn that referees are a part of the game. Sometimes referees will call a penalty on a player that may not actually be a penalty, but referees make mistakes as well.
AXIAL CODING – Combine Preliminary Themes

Training Curriculum Topics.
- Take training class or ask for help from experienced coaches (take a qualification course)
- Know the rules
- Do not put unrealistic expectations on your team
- Work on techniques daily – even if the drills are the same every day. This helps with muscle memory.
- Know the rules and penalties
- What to do in emergencies (concussions, injuries, CPR, etc.)
- Coaching demeanor should be the same when practices and games are going good or bad
- Know your kids where they are at in development, know when to move fast and move slow
- Proper techniques must be taught
- Need to use appropriate communication approaches with players that make mistakes
- Go to practices at a higher level and watch what high school coaches are doing to help players get ready for higher levels of competition
- Proper techniques and safety (concern with concussion signs, proper techniques to prevent injury frequency). Injuries happen because proper techniques are not taught
- Communication techniques to handle good situations and bad situations. In bad situations, have communication techniques that are effective to correcting players’ mistakes and/or behavior.
- Parents need to learn that referees are a part of the game. Sometimes referees will call a penalty on a player that may not actually be a penalty, but referees make mistakes as well.
- Do not coach your child’s position – have another person coach your child’s position. For example, if your kid plays on offense, then go coach defense.
- Treat your son as another player – treat all players the same.
- Have another coach work with your child on correcting mistakes - Players interpret communication from parents differently as compared to another coach on the same team.
- Take your coaching hat off as soon as you get in the car after practice or a game.

Communicate effectively when coaching youth football blocking and tackling techniques.
- Requires repetition – perform the same drills every day to increase muscle memory.
- Do not need to be negative. Stay positive or kids will lose focus
- Must teach proper blocking and tackling techniques.
- Communication techniques to teach proper techniques to resolve mistakes made by the players
- There are many teams where kids do not understand blocking assignments and/or techniques.
- Coaches need the right training to teach blocking and tackling techniques.
- In coaching, experience and training rules everything.
- Teaching proper techniques must be #1 priority in coaching.
- Many coaches do not how to run a simple play.

Parents need to communicate properly when players make mistakes.
- Know all the players and how each player responds to criticism,
- Customize communication approach for each player
• Separate yourself from your own child.
• Focus on instructing and teaching.
• Do not focus on referees, focus on what happened and how the player performed and identify mistakes that need to be corrected.
• Communication techniques to show encouragement during positive and negative situations
• Parents need to pay attention at practice on what is exactly being taught.
• Yelling at players for making a mistake or not wanting to use proper techniques
• Negative attitude with no positive reinforcement
• Parents have a hard time letting go to have someone else coach their child
• Youth players get yelled at, but are not taught proper techniques.
• Parent-coaches self-promote their own kids
• Caused one coach to switch leagues
• Limited choices to hire qualified coaches and qualified not having time, causing unqualified parents to coach
• Parents do not take the time to learn the sport.
• Parent-coaches often mistakenly use high school tactics/techniques for youth football.
• There are more unqualified than qualified coaches
SELECTIVE CODING – Final Themes List

Football Coach Training Curriculum For Parents

1. Understanding Football
   a. Take time to learn the sport
      i. Learn the techniques (do them yourself)
      ii. Know the positions, rules and penalties
      iii. Learn from higher levels
      iv. Referees are a part of the game
      v. Set realistic expectations
      vi. Have an emergency plan
   b. Understand how to improve coaching skills
      i. Qualification Opportunities
   c. Understanding differences between High School football and Youth Football

2. Importance of coaching proper football techniques
   a. Proper Blocking Techniques
      i. Frequency
      ii. Create muscle memory
   b. Proper Tackling Techniques
      i. Frequency
      ii. Create muscle memory

3. Family communication and coach communication
   a. The difference between coach and parent
      i. How to separate the two
      ii. Utilize other coaches
      iii. Coach a position different from your son
      iv. Take coach hat off after practices and games

4. Effective Communication
   a. How to communicate to players when mistakes happen
      i. Yelling – not the answer
      ii. Get to know all players individually and how each one responds to criticism
   b. Communication tools
      i. Positive and Negative approaches